



City of Seattle
Mayor Edward B. Murray

May 8, 2015

Councilmember Jean Godden
Chair, Parks, Seattle Center, Libraries, and Gender Pay Equity Committee
Seattle City Hall
600 Fourth Ave., 2nd floor
Seattle, WA 98104
Re: C.B 118355

Dear Councilmember Godden:

The City Council recently received legislation relating to the acquisition of property owned by Hugh and Martha Sisley. Last month, this bill was referred to your Parks, Seattle Center, Libraries and Gender Equity Committee for consideration. I would like to share with you my current perspective.

As proposed in the legislation, I remain committed to addressing open space needs in the Roosevelt neighborhood. A park would be an attractive addition to an area where we anticipate vibrant growth in the near future. At the same time, the Sisley properties and impending judgments provide the City with a unique opportunity, an opportunity that we should fully leverage and examine. Furthermore, I understand that members of the Council may not be ready to take action and have inquired about alternative approaches and potential options.

For these reasons, I am directing a new 60-day review to begin immediately that will be led by the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and the Department of Neighborhoods (DON).


Our intent is to re-engage the neighborhood and community to review previous plans and identify priorities. Up to this point, conversations have narrowly focused on a specific parcel with open space as the desired outcome. While open space is a priority, there is merit to evaluating all options around potential public benefit investments, including the possibility of affordable housing, in context of all the Sisley properties in the immediate area. By looking at this issue more broadly, we may identify creative alternatives that could address multiple needs. Lastly, with this review, we also want to examine whether there are other infrastructure investments to consider that could be achieved with the Sisley judgment.

After consulting with Law, we have been assured this request will not slow any proceedings involving these properties. Legal action will continue moving forward. This request for review will allow us to take full advantage of this unique situation, identifying leveraging opportunities and other potential investment options for re-investing revenue secured.

Once our review is complete, we may very well decide that addressing the open space gap as proposed in the legislation you have in hand is the best approach and use of these proceeds. The additional time however will allow us to explore whether there are alternative actions that could be packaged together to meet a broader set of goals.

If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Moore in DPD at 3-2537. He will be the Executive interdepartmental team project lead for this 60-day review. Michael Fong, my Deputy Director in the Office of Policy and Innovation will be my Executive Team point of contact on this issue.

Sincerely,



Mayor Edward B. Murray
City of Seattle

Cc: Council President Tim Burgess
Councilmember Sally Bagshaw
Councilmember Bruce Harrell
Councilmember Nick Licata
Councilmember Mike O'Brien
Councilmember John Okamoto
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen
Councilmember Kshama Sawant
City Attorney Pete Holmes